

# Interacting with the EPA

*Environmental Protection Agency*



## EPA responsibilities

The Environmental Protection Agency protects the environment for everyone in the country. We regulate and police activities that might otherwise cause pollution. We ensure there is solid information on environmental trends so that necessary action is taken. Protecting the environment and ensuring that development is sustainable are our priorities. We employ 340 people in 10 locations throughout Ireland.

## Our mission

To protect and improve the natural environment for present and future generations, taking into account the environmental, social and economic principles of sustainable development.

## Your role

### The Environment and You

We all have a role in protecting our environment. You, as a citizen, can make better choices for a better environment. In the home you can minimise waste and conserve energy. You can use sustainable modes of transport, and at work you can ensure that processes are environmentally friendly. Find out how you can make a difference on the *Environment & You* section on the EPA website at [www.epa.ie/environment](http://www.epa.ie/environment) and at [www.greenhome.ie](http://www.greenhome.ie)

## Carbon Footprint

Find out what your carbon footprint is at [www.epa.ie/whatwedo/climate/calculators](http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/climate/calculators)

## See Something? Say Something!

For information on who to contact and what to do to help resolve environmental problems, download the leaflet *See Something? Say Something!* at [www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/other/corporate](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/other/corporate)


## Dump the Dumpers

You can report illegal dumping of waste via a 24-hour call save telephone number – **1850 365 121**. This information is followed up and checked through the Environmental Enforcement Network.

## Who Does What

The EPA works with a wide range of organisations with responsibilities for environmental protection. To get a full list of these organisations consult the *Who Does What?* section of the EPA website at [www.epa.ie/environment/whodoeswhat](http://www.epa.ie/environment/whodoeswhat)

The Environmental Protection Agency publishes reports and documents providing guidance and advice on a range of environmental issues and these can be downloaded at [www.epa.ie/whatwedo/advice](http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/advice)

A scenic landscape featuring a range of mountains in the background, with a prominent peak. In the foreground, there is a calm body of water reflecting the sky and the distant land. The overall tone is peaceful and natural.

## Licensing

The EPA licenses and controls large scale waste and industrial activities to ensure that they do not endanger human health or harm the environment. Our responsibilities encompass:

- Waste licensing (landfills, incinerators, waste transfer stations etc.)
- Integrated Pollution Prevention Control (IPPC) licensing including large industrial plants such as pharmaceuticals, cement, power plants
- Emissions trading
- Waste Water Discharge licensing
- Dumping at Sea permitting
- GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms) Regulation – their contained use and controlled release
- Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) permitting for large petrol storage facilities.

### What you can do

- The EPA licensing system in Ireland is open and transparent, with access to all documentation available to the public. The licensing process for IPPC and Waste facilities allows for written submissions and objections by anyone, as well as provision of an oral hearing of objections. Submissions in relation to applications for wastewater discharge licences can also be made. All such submissions can also be made online
- To find out how to participate in the licensing process visit [www.epa.ie/whatwedo/licensing/ippc/process](http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/licensing/ippc/process)

## Enforcement

The EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement (OEE) is dedicated to the implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation in Ireland. It is responsible for:

- Enforcing all EPA licences. We conduct more than 2,000 audits/inspections of EPA licensed facilities every year
- Supervising the environmental protection activities of local authorities
- Working with local authorities, the Gardaí, the Health Service Executive, Fisheries boards and others, to tackle environmental crime through the Environmental Enforcement Network
- Acting as a resource for members of the public who have exhausted all other avenues of complaint
- Prosecuting those who flout environmental law.

### What you can do

- For more information on the EPA's enforcement role visit [www.epa.ie/whatwedo/enforce](http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/enforce)
- Read more about the Environmental Enforcement Network at [www.epa.ie/whatwedo/enforce/network](http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/enforce/network)
- Download the See *Something? Say Something!* leaflet if you have an environmental complaint
- Phone the *Dump the Dumpers* line on **1850 365 121** if you witness any illegal dumping or fly-tipping.



# Monitoring, analysing and reporting on the environment

## Air Quality

- The EPA and local authorities operate monitoring stations throughout the country, as part of the National Air Quality Monitoring Programme and produces annual air quality reports for Ireland.

## What you can do

- Get up to date information on air quality in your locality at [www.epa.ie/whatwedo/monitoring/air/data](http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/monitoring/air/data)
- Find out more about air quality and how you can play your part in improving it at [www.epa.ie/environment/air](http://www.epa.ie/environment/air)
- Download the most recent air quality reports at [www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/air/quality](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/air/quality)

## Water

- Our monitoring programme is an integral part of the management strategy to meet the Water Framework Directive. This directive aims to restore polluted waterbodies to at least “good status” by 2015. To this end we monitor the quality of rivers, lakes, estuaries and ground waters – as well as measuring levels and flows.
- The EPA reports annually on the quality of drinking water in Ireland and has the power to direct local authorities to improve the management or quality of a public water supply.

### What you can do

- Get information about Ireland’s water quality and our progress towards meeting EU targets by 2015 at [www.epa.ie/environment/water](http://www.epa.ie/environment/water)
- Visit the *EPA HydroNet* site at [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie) for access to hydrometric data collected by local authorities
- Download the most recent water reports at [www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water)
- Download the most recent drinking water reports at [www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/drinking](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/drinking)
- Download the most recent bathing water reports at [www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/bathing](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/bathing)
- Download the most recent urban waste water reports at [www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/wastewater](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/wastewater)





## Climate change

The Climate Change Programme in the EPA encompasses responsibilities for Emissions Trading (National Allocation Plans, Permitting and National Emissions Trading Registry), Kyoto Project Mechanisms, GHG Emission Inventories and Projections, Scientific Advice, and Climate Change Research.

We quantify Ireland's emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the context of our Kyoto treaty obligations. The EPA regulates activities that have significant GHG emitting potential, and maintains a national emission-trading registry of major generators of carbon dioxide.

### What you can do

- Check out the climate change pages on the EPA website at [www.epa.ie/whatwedo/climate](http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/climate) and find your carbon footprint with the carbon calculator at [www.epa.ie/whatwedo/climate/calculators](http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/climate/calculators)
- To read an overview of the EPA's work in the climate change area, and the challenges that Ireland faces, download *The EPA and Climate Change* at [www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/climatechange](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/climatechange)
- Visit [www.epa.ie/environment/what/air](http://www.epa.ie/environment/what/air) to see what you can do to save energy and money and travel smartly
- View the EPA climate change lecture series where international experts discussed key aspects of climate change, including the basic science, predictions, impacts and options for actions to deal with this global challenge. They are available in formats suitable for either broadband or dial-up connection at [www.epa.ie/downloads/videos/climate](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/videos/climate)



## Proactive waste management

The EPA co-ordinates the National Waste Prevention Programme, and has an input into implementing Producer Responsibility Initiatives and other measures.

We enforce new regulations such as the WEEE Directive on waste electronic and electrical equipment and the Restriction of Hazardous Substances Order (RoHS) and substances that deplete the ozone layer. The EPA prepares and keeps under review the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan. The EPA reports annually on trends in waste generation and waste management in Ireland, and illustrates progress towards recovery targets.

### What you can do

- See what changes and you can make at [www.epa.ie/environment/waste](http://www.epa.ie/environment/waste)
- Read the National Waste Reports at <http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/waste/stats>
- Local authorities offer advice on recycling household waste. Contact details for local authorities can be found at [www.epa.ie/environment/la](http://www.epa.ie/environment/la)



## Environmental planning, education and guidance

Effective management of the environment is increasingly science-driven. Through EPA commissioned research and development programmes, we generate the knowledge and expertise to protect and manage the environment.

Education is a vital way to ensure the protection of our environment for future generations. The EPA has developed educational resources for primary and secondary schools, including games, downloadable posters and resource packs for teachers.

### What you can do

- Learn about the EPA's research programmes at [www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/research](http://www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/research)
- Inform the teachers in your local schools about the educational resources which can be downloaded at [www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/education](http://www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/education)
- Read advice and guidance documents from the EPA on a range of topics from air quality to waste management at [www.epa.ie/downloads/advice](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/advice)
- Watch video recordings on a wide range of environmental issues at [www.epa.ie/downloads/videos](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/videos)
- Guidance documents covering a wide range of activities are available at [www.epa.ie/downloads/advice](http://www.epa.ie/downloads/advice)
- Use the *ENViron* interactive online map viewer to access dynamic environmental maps of Ireland. Zoom in on your county or townland for detailed information or just view the big picture. To view the maps go to [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie) and click on *EPA Maps* in top right hand corner

## Make sure you play your part in protecting Ireland's environment

- Inform yourself on the many strands of environmental protection work undertaken by the EPA and find out how you can help, either by participating, making a submission, or making a change in your life. A good starting point is the *What We Do* ([www.epa.ie/whatwedo](http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo)) and *The Environment and You* ([www.epa.ie/environment](http://www.epa.ie/environment)) sections of the EPA website – and follow the links which apply to you.
- The EPA has established an Environmental Queries Unit. Members of the public can contact this dedicated Unit with any query of an environmental nature. The Unit can be contacted on the EPA's LoCall number below or by email at [info@epa.ie](mailto:info@epa.ie).
- For further information contact the EPA at LoCall 1890 335599.

### Contact Information:

EPA Headquarters, PO Box 3000, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford

LoCall: 1890 335599 email: [info@epa.ie](mailto:info@epa.ie) website: [www.epa.ie/about/contact](http://www.epa.ie/about/contact)

*(Please note that the rates charged for the use of 1890 (LoCall) numbers may vary among different service providers).*



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